

Sullivan County NH

Type of meeting: Board of Commissioners – Regular Public Meeting
Minutes

Date/Time: Wednesday, April 18, 2007; 3 PM

Place: Unity County Complex – Sullivan County Health
Care Facility, Frank Smith Living Room.

Attendees: Commissioner Ethel Jarvis – *Chair*, Ben Nelson – *Vice Chair* (arrived later) and Jeff Barrette – *Clerk*, Ed Gil de Rubio – *County Manager*; Greg Chanis – *Facilities & Operations Director*; Scott Wojtkiewicz – *Sullivan County Health Care Administrator (SCHCA)*; Heidi Smith – *S.C.H.C. Director of Nursing*; Arthur O’Leary – *Genesis ElderCare Regional Director*; Sharon Johnson-Callum (minute taker).

Other public attendees: State Delegate Ray Gagnon and Aaron Aldrich, *Eagle Times Reporter*.

2:59 Commissioner Jarvis, Chair, brought the meeting to order. Mr. Chanis led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1. MEETING MINUTES REVIEW

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.A. APR. 3, 2007 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

3:01 A motion was made, by Commissioner Barrette, to accept the April 3, 2007 minutes as written. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously. Commissioner Nelson was absent for the vote.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.B. APRIL 2 THROUGH APRIL 6TH FY08 BUDGET WORK SESSION SCHEDULE AND AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.C. APRIL 6TH GRANT APPLICATION INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Commissioner Jarvis noted the minutes should include Representative Converse as attending and that Rep. Franklin returned to the room at approximately 1:30 p.m.

3:03 A motion was made, by Commissioner Barrette, to accept the budget review work schedule and grant interview schedule as amended [with Rep. Converse’s name as attending and the return time entered for Rep. Franklin]. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously. Commissioner Nelson was absent for the vote.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.D. APRIL 16TH MINUTES

Ms. Johnson-Callum noted the minutes were not completed, but would be ready for the next meeting.

3:05 *Commissioner Nelson arrived.*

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.C SULLIVAN COUNTY HEALTH CARE – EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Jarvis noted as this included a probable Executive Session it would be moved to after the “Public Participation” so that both Executive Sessions were held together.

- 3:06 A motion was made, by Commissioner Barrette, to move Agenda Item No. 2.c. Probable Executive Session to after the public participation. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.A. SULLIVAN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CENSUS

Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted the report they received would not include the Aging Report sheet until accuracy of numbers could be confirmed.

CENSUS REPORTS

1. Page 1 – Sullivan County Nursing Home March 2007 Billing. Mr. Wojtkiewicz briefed the group on the *March 2007 Billing* report. He noted revenues were low due to a low Medicare A census. Revenue came in under \$58,974.67 of budget for current month. Mr. Wojtkiewicz briefed the group on the revenues received in February; total \$1,018,780.25. And, briefed the group on the Year To Date total of \$7,208,513.37.
2. Page 2 – *March Census Summary*. Mr. Wojtkiewicz briefed the group on the March Census Summary, and February and March 2007 Admits and Discharges and Expired statistics. He pointed out the Therapy department is doing a great job with residents that come in for skilled care, Medicare A. Page 3 – Census As of April 18, 2007. Mr. Wojtkiewicz briefed the group on the Census as of April 18, 2007. Census is at 144: 113 Medicaid, 20 Private, 11 Medicare, and 12 vacant. They have an admission coming in today and tomorrow. Their External Care Coordinator is working hard with the regional hospitals. The group discussed possible reasons for a low census. Mr. O’Leary noted census has been down regionally for March, including their Lebanon and Concord facilities; and indicated, traditionally, March is a slow month. Mr. Wojtkiewicz has noticed a trend in July and August, with census taking a dip due to surgeons on vacation. He indicated they’ve had a number of referrals but are considered second or third on the list as the referrals are coming from Claremont and Newport, with spouses not wanting to travel so far by taking a bus. Some families have commented that the transportation times are unreliable. Mr. Wojtkiewicz briefly discussed the “poor farm” stigma among the community regarding the nursing home. Mr. Gil de Rubio will talk with Ms. Koscielniak about transportation and the dial a ride program. He indicated he met with Bill [LeClair, Community Alliance Human Services: Transportation Division], Operation Manager, who seemed very accommodating. Mr. Wojtkiewicz spoke briefly of sending surveys to family

members regarding transportation services. Mr. Wojtkiewicz feels a low census could be caused, also, through physicians referring a patient to a facility closer to the physician. The group discussed the budgeted Medicare and actual.

STAFFING

Ms. Heidi Smith noted staffing is stabilizing in terms of numbers. She spoke regarding the three different shifts, unfilled positions, and areas filled by agency or by a weekend nurse. They continue to have problems with shifts not filled as staff not there, 170 shifts were not filled due to call outs. She spoke regarding the details and noted she created a calendar of shifts not filled that could be shared with management. She indicated, though staff was getting tired, there have been no quality of care issues. Mr. Gil de Rubio is creating a report regarding call out costs, with monthly comparison, and will be sharing that with the Board. Ms. Smith noted they have 5 new LNA's graduating this week, one of their best classes so far, with bright dedicated young women. She is hoping for RNA interviews by end of the week. Ms. Smith confirmed it's more difficult to find nurses and that it's a nation wide shortage. They attend job fairs. She confirmed the County does have a tuition reimbursement program. Commissioner Barrette noted he approves of promoting within as they aren't on the open market stealing from someone else and they get dedication and loyalty. Ms. Smith confirmed they provide employee tuition reimbursement after the employee completes a class. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted a previous policy provided reimbursement upfront with the stipulation they work for two years, but found this policy failed when employees left within the two-year period. Ms. Smith noted they encourage continuing education, and support those that take classes. Mr. Wojtkiewicz confirmed LNA wages are very competitive and LPN and RN starting wages are lower but become comparable with length of time. Commissioner Barrette asked if they should search for more creative ways to promote within? Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted the challenge is finding the right people to move from LNA to RN slot. Commissioner Jarvis noted some don't want to move up, as they don't want more responsibility. Mr. O'Leary noted some of the Genesis facilities use a "sign on bonuses" that entices a couple people, but over all staffing is tough. Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted staff is beginning to talk again about a bonus program for those that have not used time, or called out; and he found they were surprised that Union leaders turned this down during negotiations. Mr. Gil de Rubio indicated they would revisit this issue with the Union negotiators. Commissioner Nelson talked about a wellness program at Dartmouth that pays money to employees. The group concurred once an incentive program is implemented; the program is quick to spread throughout the facility. Commissioner Barrette pointed once they calculate the total cost of call outs, he suggested they divide it in half and take that half to disburse as incentives for people to stay.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 FACILITIES & OPERATIONS REPORT

Mr. Greg Chanis handed out copies of his report summarizing the events of the fire alarm on Saturday, March 31st. The group discussed whether it should be read in Executive Session and decided to have him read it into the public minutes. Mr. Chanis read the following:

"The purpose of this report is to summarize the events related to the fire alarm that occurred at Sullivan County Health Care on Saturday March 31. At approximately 12:20 a.m., an employee noticed a burning smell and activated the fire alarm system by pulling the lever on one of the 'pull boxes' located throughout the facility. In addition the charge nurse on duty immediately called the maintenance pager, Director of Facilities, Director of Nursing and the Nursing Home Administrator. After activation, the alarm system is designed to do several things. First, it will trip the 'Master Box', which is connected directly to the Claremont fire Department, alerting them that there is an alarm. A representative of the Claremont Fire Dept. confirmed that they received a signal from the SCHC Master Box at 12:24 a.m. A fire truck left the station at 12:26 a.m. and arrived at SCHC at 12:34 a.m. Secondly, the system sends an alarm signal to HSM Security. This is a company, which monitors our alarm system 24/7. A representative from HSM Security confirmed that they received an alarm signal from the SCHC system at 12:23 a.m. They immediately notified Southwest Mutual Aid in Keene who then dispatched additional fire fighting equipment to SCHC, including Bruce Baker, Fire Chief for the Unity Fire Dept. In addition, HSM security then called SCHC to alert them that they had received an alarm from the fire alarm panel. Finally, the fire alarm system is designed to activate the audible alarms and flashing strobes located in the facility. The alarms and strobes located in the MacConnell Unit operated correctly but the ones located in Stearns and Sanders did not. Roland Fournier (County maintenance worker) arrived at the facility at approximately 12:55 a.m. and thinking that the failure of the audible and visual alarms was an electrical problem, called Brad Bennett (County Master Electrician) who arrived on the scene at approximately 2:00 a.m. Brad determined that the problem was in the fire alarm controls and called R.B. Allen, who is our vendor for the fire alarm system, at approximately 4:30 a.m. After calling R.B. Allen, Brad consulted with Bruce Baker who suggested setting up a fire watch until the problem was resolved. Brad Bennett and Roland Fournier shared this duty until the problem was resolved. A technician from R.B. Allen arrived on the scene at approximately 3:30 p.m. After several hours of troubleshooting, the technician determined that the cause of the failure was related to the software, which operates the control module in the fire alarm system. The technician reloaded the software from his laptop computer and the system was tested several times to verify that it was operating correctly."

The group discussed that the only part that failed was the audio annunciation portion in a specific section of the facility. The software was updated and tested and audio works. Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted when the incident occurred, staff pulled fire alarms, and followed procedures; they did a good job, they called maintenance, Director of Nursing and the Administrator; the issue was solved by 2 – 2:30. The Commissioners requested they

ensure that the Sheriff is contacted when the County Manager is out and that the Sheriff contact them to report such incidences.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 SHERIFF'S OFFICE: OHRV \$7,200 GRANT

It was noted the Sheriff's Office required a letter of authorization from the Board of Commissioners allowing them to enter into the OHRV grant of \$7,200.

3:47 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to authorize all of the Board to sign the letter stating they accept the OHRV grant of \$7,200. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

The Board signed the letter. A copy is on file at the Commissioners' Office.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

GREATER SULLIVAN COUNTY ALL HAZARD HEALTH REGION (GSCAHR)

Mr. Gil de Rubio advised of the next meeting of the GSCAHR, tomorrow in Newport at 9:30 a.m. He briefed them on DHHS Commissioner Stephen's plans to stream line 19 regions into 10, with the counties providing leadership and emergency guidance for the AHHR. He indicated, this year, DHHS chose Sullivan County, Cheshire, Coos and Hillsborough to begin the stream lining – so that the regions only encompass the towns and cities within the county borders. With FY 08, DHHS will grant to the County approximately \$60,000 to help streamline, through the hiring of a Coordinator of operations. Mr. Gil de Rubio confirmed Jane Hubbard was working a lot on the AHHR plan. He feels Sullivan County, taking the initiative, has "opened the eyes at DHHS" and would like to get through the 1st tabletop in June to see how it's doing. He'll seek Ms. Hubbard's advise on the Coordinator position. Commissioner Nelson recommended former Commissioner Don Clarke as Coordinator.

DOC UPDATE

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he attended a full staff meeting at the DOC this morning, at which he provided an update on capital projects and the Superintendent position job search. Eighteen (18) superintendent applications were received; they held the 1st round cut; and have seven applicants for the next phase. The next selection committee includes the Board of Commissioners, County Sheriff, County Attorney, County Manager and DOC management team. They will review the seven applicants and decide on the strategy and who to interview. Kevin Warwick is providing assistance on the project. They anticipate hiring a new Superintendent by 7/1/07.

DOC CAPITAL PLAN

The Sullivan County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (SCCJCC) met and approved Option 1 – New Construction presented by Ricci Greene Associates (RGA). The committee formed a subcommittee to assist RGA on the 4/23/07 presentation to the Delegates, and to make future plans. The subcommittee includes Representative Ray

Gagnon, Commissioner Barrette, DOC Capt. John Milliken, County Sheriff Michael Prozzo, County Attorney Marc Hathaway and Mr. Gil de Rubio. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted DOC staff are excited about the project, morale is high, and all are on board with what is going on and eager for what comes up.

Commissioner Jarvis wanted to discuss the meeting to borrow 2 million. Commissioner Barrette inserted a "point of order" and requested them to allow Mr. Gil de Rubio to finish his report.

ASSISTED CARE/INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITY UPDATE

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he and Michael Pulling met with the printers regarding the Priority Deposit campaign. They will be holding public informational forums in May at the Ahern Building.

GOALS: VIDEO TAPING UPDATE

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted, as part of the County goals report, video taping future Delegation meetings and providing cable coverage was requested. He met with Peter Martin who will cover the 4/23/07 meeting and broadcast it on CCTV, NCTV and live stream from his website. Mr. Martin has indicated he would do this for free as he has sponsors, a similar arrangements he provides for Newport by taping "Revite" meetings.

REQUESTED REPORTS UPDATE

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted Mr. Graham is working on 3rd quarter finances and a cash flow analysis and Mr. O'Leary, of Genesis ElderCare, will be responding with a letter and submitting updated invoices. Mr. O'Leary confirmed he'd try to get info to Mr. Gil de Rubio in time for Monday's meeting. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted all Department heads were advised to "tighten up belts" on spending. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the EFC and Commissioners approved the County Treasurer to take out a line of credit of 2 million. Mr. Gil de Rubio requested Mr. Graham and Peter Lovely, County Treasurer Deputy, review the financial data. The Commissioners and Mr. Gil de Rubio asked Mr. Wojtkiewicz if the \$400,000 arrived? Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted they received an amount on the 17th and expect another on the 24th.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

Commissioner Nelson requested a 5-year snap shot report to date on grants received through the Commissioners Office.

Commissioner Barrette had nothing to report.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.C. SULLIVAN COUNTY HEALTH CARE: EXECUTIVE SESSION PER RSA 91-A:3.II.C. PERSONNEL ISSUE

5:07 A motion was made, by Commissioner Barrette, to go in to Executive Session to discuss the personnel issue [Per RSA 91-A:3.II.c.]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. Discussion Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the Executive

Session should include the Facilities Director, Director of Nursing, S.C.H.C. Administrator, and Mr. O'Leary. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

5:07 Rep. Ray Gagnon and Aaron Aldrich left the room.

6:00 p.m. Commissioner Barrette made a motion to move out of Executive Session. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

No formal decisions were required to be made.

6:01 p.m. Commissioner Barrette made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



*Jeff Barrette, Clerk
Board of Commissioners*

JB/s.j-c.

Date minutes signed on:

5/25/07